

**MINUTES OF MARION CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING**  
**COUNCIL CHAMBERS AT CITY HALL**  
**TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 2017**  
**6:30 P.M.**

A regular meeting was held by City Council on Tuesday, September 12, 2017 at 6:30 p.m. over which Mayor Ashley Brady presided. Council members Ralph Atkinson, Ronald Atkinson, Michael Baker, Joseph Frazier, Mayor Pro-tem Emerson Hunt and Tassie Lewis were present. Also present were City Administrator Alan Ammons, City Treasurer Patricia Brown, City Clerk Lakesha Shannon, City Attorney James Brogdon and Chief Dwayne Tennie.

Mayor Ashley Brady called the meeting to order and Pastor Denley Caughman gave the opening prayer. Mr. Ammons led the Pledge of Allegiance. Mayor Brady welcomed citizens, guests and the press (Hometown TV 8).

***Councilman Ronald Atkinson made a motion to approve the minutes of the Regular City Council meeting held on August 8, 2017. The motion was seconded by Councilman Michael Baker; motion carried.***

Chase Funderburk, with the City of Marion Fire Department, was named the *August Employee of the Month*. Mayor Brady thanked Mr. Funderburk for all he does to fight fires, protect the citizens and save lives.

Mayor Ashley Brady noted that Bethel United Methodist Church is celebrating their 150th church anniversary. He commented that this is quite a feat for a church and he whole-heartedly agrees that Council approve a proclamation for this celebration. ***Mayor Pro-tem Emerson Hunt made a motion to approve a proclamation for Bethel United Methodist Church 150th Anniversary. The motion was seconded by Councilman Ralph Atkinson; motion carried.***

Mayor Ashley Brady explained the USDA Community Facility Grant Resolution. He stated that the grant funding will be used to purchase a new fire truck. The Fire Department currently has two older model fire trucks that need repairs; however, one of the trucks is not serviceable, and replacement brakes are no longer available for the other truck. Mayor Brady stated that a new fire truck would help ensure better fire protection, and help the City maintain a good ISO fire protection rating. An application has been submitted for a \$50,000 grant to purchase the fire truck; however, the City must contribute an additional \$350,000 to receive the grant. Mayor Brady stated that authorization is needed to apply for the grant with the understanding that the \$350,000 must be available within the next 24 months. He stated that this amount can be financed over a long-term period with a lease purchase. ***Mayor Pro-tem Emerson Hunt made a motion to approve the USDA Community Facility Grant Resolution. The motion was seconded by Councilman Ralph Atkinson; motion carried.***

Mayor Brady stated that a public hearing was held prior to the City Council Meeting to discuss the annexation of a property located on North Main Street into the City of Marion. ***Councilman Ralph Atkinson made a motion to approve second reading of Ordinance 17-05 An Ordinance Authorizing the Annexation of Certain Property into the City of Marion. The motion was seconded by Councilman Ronald Atkinson; motion carried.***

Mayor Brady explained the proposal to eliminate the Street and Sanitation Departments and establish a Public Works Department. ***Councilman Ralph Atkinson made a motion to approve second reading of Ordinance 17-06 An Ordinance to Eliminate the Sanitation and Street Departments and Create the Public Works Department and Create the Position of Public Works Superintendent. The motion was seconded by Mayor Pro-tem Emerson Hunt; motion carried.*** Councilman Joseph

Frazier asked if the Public Works Director position would be salaried. Mayor Brady explained that a job description will be prepared and the position will be available for promotion within first. If no interest is shown, the position will then be advertised publicly.

Mayor Brady stated that no action is needed on Item #10 of the agenda as the City of Marion had no damage from Hurricane Irma.

### **ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT:**

Mr. Ammons stated that there were only a few limbs down and a street sign as a result of Hurricane Irma. He added that we were very fortunate to have no other damages.

Mr. Ammons provided an update on USDA Grant applications. He explained that the Community Facility Grant for the fire truck was submitted three years ago and funding has just become available. He recommended that the City apply for grants early as upcoming needs are anticipated. Mr. Ammons stated that he met with the various departments and prepared a list of items that are needed. This will allow the City to be proactive in applying for grant funding rather than borrowing money for these purchases. He explained three proposed projects which include: A Public Works pickup truck, Police Department vehicles, and a Public Works gripper truck. He recommended Council's approval to move forward with these projects, and noted that it would be no sooner than 8-10 months before grant funding would be received for any of the projects. ***Mayor Pro-tem Emerson Hunt made a motion to apply for the USDA Grants for the three items as presented. The motion was seconded by Councilman Ronald Atkinson.*** Councilman Ralph Atkinson asked if the City Grant Writer had previously applied for these grants. He added that we should be applying for any grants that are available. Councilman Joseph Frazier asked for an update on the proposed grant for the Hike and Bike Trail. Mr. Ammons stated that the City is applying for some funding for that project and Mr. Blake

Sanders will come back to provide an update. ***Hearing no further discussion; motion carried.***

Mr. Ammons provided an update on the lots cut by the City, and noted that 111 lots have been cut so far in 2017. He stated that we are doing a better job of keeping records for billing, and he anticipates that 65 % of the fees will be reimbursed through property taxes. Councilman Joseph Frazier asked if any requests were received from senior citizens to have there grass cut. Mr. Ammons stated that he only received one request for a vacant lot on Henry McGill Street which has been approved for the past two years.

### **CITY ATTORNEY'S LEGAL UPDATE**

City Attorney James Brogdon provided an update on the case McKnight vs. The City of Marion which has been pending for several years. He stated that he City has been notified that this case is on the roster to be heard in Marion County on September 25<sup>th</sup>.

### **DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS**

Mayor Brady stated that Departmental Reports were included in the Council packets.

### **DISTRICTS AND CITY UPDATE FOR COUNCIL AND MAYOR**

Mayor Ashley Brady commented on the grass cutting and noted the increase in lots cut this year as we work towards cleaning up the City. Mayor Brady stated that catch basins and storm drains were cleaned throughout the City in preparation for the storm, and this process will continue over the next few weeks. At the beginning of 2018, a system will be developed to complete this task annually so that it can be maintained on a regular basis. The City also sent the truck to the Town of Nichols to help clean their catch basins. Mayor Brady urged citizens to assist by cleaning around catch basins in front of their homes when performing yard work. Mayor Brady stated that the City has hired a new

heavy equipment operator who is working to haul large debris away from the city landfill to the county landfill.

Mayor Brady commented on the new subdivision under construction on Bluff Street. He stated that there have been some concerns regarding flooding on the properties that are behind that area on Marshall Street due to the recent excess of rain. Mr. Ammons has spoken with the homeowners and the developer about this issue. Mayor Brady stated the property was originally very low; however, the developer hauled in sand clay to build it up. The developer has agreed to install catch basins and pipes to alleviate flooding behind the Marshall Street properties and to allow drainage into his retention pond.

Mayor Brady reported that the Thomas Mobile Home property is currently in the process of being purchased. Mr. Ammons advised the owners that the mobile homes on the property are not habitable and will have to be removed. Any new homes would have to be elevated to the county's current base flood elevation, plus two feet. This property is zoned for single family dwellings.

Mayor Brady provided an update on the old Creel Oil property on Liberty Street. The owner is in the process of getting a container to clean up the property, and Mayor Brady will follow up with the progress. Mayor Brady stated that the City was well prepared for the anticipated hurricane and gave an overview of the proposed plan of action.

Councilman Michael Baker stated that Mr. Ammons addressed all his concerns during the month.

Councilman Joseph Frazier commented on the concerns of flooding on Marshall Street. He stated that one of the property owners contacted him regarding this issue and he and Mr. Ammons went out to view the area and spoke with the developer. Mr. Frazier

commented on a vacant building on Liberty Street. He stated that a building permit was posted at the site and asked when work would begin. Mr. Ammons stated that the owner is planning to have repairs done to the building. He explained that the building permit is good for six months, and can be renewed for an additional six months. Mr. Frazier requested to know when the incident report would be available for the officer involved accident that happened in front of Wal-Mart a few months ago. Mr. Ammons stated that Chief Tennie was advised that the report must be reviewed through the chain of command and will be provided after that time. Chief Tennie added that the review process was delayed by the highway patrol due to preparations for the storm. Mayor Brady commented that the City is on top of this situation and added that the review process takes longer when it involves law enforcement.

Councilman Ronald Atkinson stated that Mr. Ammons addressed all his concerns during the month.

Council Ralph Atkinson had no update.

Councilwoman Tassie Lewis stated that her prayers go out to the victims of Hurricanes Harvey and Irma. She stated that donations are being collected at the City of Marion Fire Department, and urged citizens to support the City in these efforts. Councilwoman Lewis also asked that citizens consider the safety of our children by slowing down while driving past school bus stops during early morning hours.

Mayor Pro-tem Emerson Hunt acknowledged some of his classmates that were in attendance. He also thanked the City staff for being proactive in preparing for the anticipated storm. Mayor Pro-tem Hunt stated that when he was elected to City Council he vowed to be available to any citizen, regardless of the district they live in. He stated that Council should be a body of one for all citizens. Mayor Pro-tem Hunt stated that he is available to assist any resident who has flooding issues on Marshall Street. He requested

that Council refrain from exposing the names of residents and attacking them personally when discussing issues. He thanked everyone for their support.

Councilman Joseph Frazier asked if addresses have already been assigned to the new subdivision on Bluff Street. He commented that it was his understanding that addresses are approved by City Council. Mr. Ammons explained that the City provides addresses for public streets owned by SCDOT; however, this subdivision is located on private property and the addresses have been assigned by the County. He stated that the City will provide sanitation services to the property, but no paving or road maintenance.

### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

***Councilman Ralph Atkinson made a motion to go into executive session to discuss personnel matters regarding the Police Department. The motion was seconded by Mayor Pro-tem Emerson Hunt; motion carried.***

***Returning from executive session, Councilman Michael Baker made a motion to return to regular session. The motion was seconded by Councilman Ralph Atkinson; motion carried.*** Mayor Ashley Brady stated that no action was taken in executive session.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

***Hearing no further business, Councilman Michael Baker made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Councilman Ronald Atkinson; motion carried.***

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Mayor Ashley Brady

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City Clerk Lakesha Y. Shannon

Taped: September 12, 2017